

**CHEPSTOW HOUSE**



**Policy for Safeguarding  
Children**

**Updated June 2011**

**Chepstow House**  
**Safeguarding Children Policy**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in the **Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education 2007** document as:

- ◆ protecting children from maltreatment;
- ◆ preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ◆ ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- ◆ undertaking that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and to enter

**School Aims**

- ◆ Establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to.
- ◆ Ensure children know that there are adults in the school whom they can approach if they are worried.
- ◆ Include opportunities in the PSHE curriculum for children to develop the skills they need to recognise and stay safe from abuse.

**Duty of Alpha Plus**

The Group will ensure that child protection policy is monitored and supported by a senior member of the Group management, and that appropriate resources are provided to establishments for them to exercise their responsibilities to safeguard children. The Group policy will be reviewed annually and updated as required. Copies of the policy will be provided to any member of staff or parent on request. The Group policy will also be embedded into the school policy.

Within every establishment the Group will ensure:

- ◆ That the safety and well being of children are paramount.
- ◆ That children will be listened to.
- ◆ That children will be respected.
- ◆ That children will be understood within their own culture and racial origin.
- ◆ That there is an atmosphere where children feel secure and are valued.
- ◆ That the school has a range of adults that children can approach for help.
- ◆ That staff recognise the signs and symptoms of suspected abuse.
- ◆ That there are clear procedures and lines of communication
- ◆ That the school works closely with parents and other agencies
- ◆ That children at risk are monitored
- ◆ That the curriculum is used to raise children's awareness and build confidence (PSHE)
- ◆ That Child Protection training is regularly updated for all staff.

**Duty of the School**

Appoint a Child Protection Co-ordinator (CPC) to take responsibility for:

- ◆ Implementing the Group child protection policy within the establishment
- ◆ Supporting other staff in their understanding of child protection issues and ability to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse
- ◆ Managing the establishment's response to a disclosure of abuse.

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Chepstow House school recognises its legal duty to work with other agencies in protecting children from harm and responding to abuse.

Child protection issues will be addressed through the curriculum as appropriate, especially through personal, social and health education.

At Chepstow House School we ensure that bullying is identified and dealt with for the benefit and social development of all concerned. All pupils are encouraged to show respect for others and take responsibility for protecting themselves.

We create a culture of value and respect for each individual, having positive regard for each child's heritage arising from their colour, ethnicity, and language, cultural and social background.

### **Duty of Staff**

It will be made clear to staff applying for posts within the School that the position is exempt from provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.

Staff will be made aware of the Childcare Act (2006) and Every Child Matters (2003).

At Chepstow House school all staff (teaching and non-teaching) seek to adopt an open and accepting attitude towards pupils as part of their responsibility for pastoral care. The staff hope that parents and pupils feel free to talk about any concerns and see school as a safe place. Pupils' worries and fears will be taken seriously if they seek help from a member of staff. However, staff cannot guarantee confidentiality if concerns are such that referral must be made to the appropriate agencies in order to safeguard the child's welfare.

Staff who observe injuries which appear to be non-accidental, or who are told anything significant by a pupil, must report their concerns to Mrs Barr who is the Child Protection (CPO). Mrs Barr has attended a course and received Level 3 training on Safeguarding children which included training in child protection matters. Training is updated regularly for the Head and CPO deputy every other year.

### **Duty of Child Protection Officer**

Broad areas of responsibility proposed for the designated senior person for child protection in each establishment:

#### **Referrals**

- ◆ Refer cases of suspected abuse or allegations to the relevant investigating agencies.
- ◆ Act as a source of support, advice and expertise within the educational establishment when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies.
- ◆ Liaise with Head teacher/Principal (where role is not carried out by the Head teacher) to inform him/her of any issues and ongoing investigations and ensure there is always cover for this role.
- ◆ Liaise with the Local Child Protection Board to ensure awareness of local multi-agency procedures, local referral procedures and training opportunities, and maintain a list of local multi-agency contacts.

### **Raising Awareness**

- ◆ Ensure the establishment's child protection policy is updated and reviewed annually and work with the governing body/proprietor regarding this.
- ◆ Ensure parents see copies of the child protection policy which alerts them to the fact that referrals may be made and the role of the establishment in this to avoid conflict later.
- ◆ Where children leave the establishment ensure their child protection.

### **Training**

- ◆ To recognise how to identify signs of abuse and when it is appropriate to make a referral.
- ◆ Having a working knowledge of how the Local Safeguarding Children Board operates, the conduct of a child protection case conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- ◆ Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child protection policy especially new or part time staff who may work with different educational establishments.
- ◆ Ensure all staff have induction training covering child protection and are able to recognise and report any concerns immediately they arise.
- ◆ Be able to keep detailed accurate secure written records of referrals/concerns.

### **Induction and Training**

Every new member of staff, including part-timers, temporary, visiting and contract staff working in school, receives basic training on their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and bullying and on the procedures for recording and referring any concerns to the Child Protection Officer or the Head Mistress as well as working with different agencies. Training in child protection is an important part of the induction process. More detail is set out in our policy on Induction of New Staff and Volunteers in Child Protection. Their training is updated at 3 yearly intervals. All are given guidelines on what to do if a child approaches them to discuss allegations of abuse (appendix 1) and the Code of Behaviour - for All Staff and Volunteers (appendix 2). All are also made aware of the pastoral care concern sheet (appendix 3).

**Parents**

Parents are expected to help their children to behave in non-violent and non-abusive ways towards both staff and other pupils. Parents will be informed if it was necessary to use minimal force to protect a pupil from injury or to prevent a pupil from harming others.

Parents should always inform the school of any accidental bruising or other injuries that might otherwise be misinterpreted. They should also inform the school of any changes in home circumstances, such as the death of a member of the family, separation or divorce, that might lead to otherwise unexplained changes in behaviour or characteristics.

Parents can feel confident that procedures are in place to ensure that all staff appointed have undergone procedures to ensure that they are suitable to work with children. All voluntary helpers undergo similar procedures including a police check.

Every staff member has an enhanced CRB disclosure. If an allegation is made about a staff member, we ensure that all parents at Chepstow House School will know how to make a formal complaint about a staff member or volunteer in the setting which may include an allegation of abuse. Guidelines on the procedures if an allegation is made about a member of staff is accused are outlined in the Child Protection - Professional Abuse Policy (appendix 4)

## **Policy Statement**

### **Why do we need to safeguard children?**

- ◆ Children have a right to be safe
- ◆ Adults have a responsibility to safeguard and protect children
- ◆ Abuse is damaging, and can blight the remainder of the child's life
- ◆ Abused children sometimes become abusing adults
- ◆ Child abuse exists in a world of secrecy and silence - the cycle of abuse has to be broken
- ◆ An abuser may well abuse many other children who also have a right to protection
- ◆ So children can grow up to be well-adjusted adults
- ◆ To prevent death and serious injuries.

The staff at Chepstow House School fully recognise their professional responsibilities for protection from harm to all children in our care.

Our policy applies to all staff, volunteers and everyone working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- ◆ Ensuring we practice safe recruitment, in accordance with the Criminal Record Bureau, when checking the suitability of staff, teaching, administrative, and volunteers who work with children.
- ◆ Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- ◆ Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.
- ◆ Supporting pupils who have been abused in accordance with the agreed child protection plan.
- ◆ Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

We will follow the procedures set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education and Skills to:

- ◆ Ensure that the Alpha Plus Group and Governors take responsibility for overseeing the Safeguarding Policies and Procedures and that they are reviewed annually.
- ◆ Ensure we have a designated senior person for child protection who has received appropriate training and support for this role.
- ◆ Ensure every member of staff (including temporary and supply staff and volunteers) and Head Office knows the name of the designated senior person responsible for child protection and their role.
- ◆ Ensure all staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities in being alert to the signs of abuse and responsibility for referring any concerns to the designated senior person responsible for child protection.
- ◆ Ensure that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on the school and staff for child protection by setting out its obligations in the school prospectus.
- ◆ Notify social services if there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil who is on the child protection register.
- ◆ Develop effective links with relevant agencies and co-operate as required with their enquiries regarding child protection matters including attendance at case conferences.

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- ◆ Keep written records of concerns about children, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately. (See appendix 2 for concern sheet)
- ◆ Ensure all records are kept securely; separate from the main pupil file, and in locked locations.
- ◆ Develop and then follow procedures where an allegation is made against a member of staff or volunteer.
- ◆ Ensure safe recruitment practices are always followed.

We recognise that children who are abused or witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will endeavour to support the pupil through:

- ◆ The content of the curriculum.
- ◆ The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- ◆ The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school. The school will ensure that the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable but they are valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- ◆ Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, Child and Adult Mental Health Service, education welfare service and educational psychology service.
- ◆ Ensuring that, where a pupil on the child protection register leaves, their information is transferred to the new school immediately and that the child's social worker is informed.

### **Action following a Disclosure**

Where a child discloses concerns or makes an allegation no judgement should be made or enquiries initiated by the staff member merely listening and seeking clarification is required before consulting with the designated CPO. Confidentiality should not be promised to anyone. A record should be kept of the conversation. Where there is a suspicion that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, the concern should be referred without delay to the Head/CPO who will investigate.

If the disclosure reveals possible concerns about other staff members, it is important that no discussion should take place with the individual named in the disclosure. Guidance on how such an allegation should be handled is to be found in Appendix 4 to this policy.

Where the child requires urgent medical treatment an ambulance should be called to take him/her to hospital and concerns raised with the CPO.

### **Action for the CPO**

Following a disclosure, the Child Protection Officer will then speak to the parent/s in the case of evidence of physical abuse to seek an explanation, but only if there is no risk to the child of further harm resulting out of this action.

In the event of disclosure of suspected sexual abuse, an immediate referral to the local Social Services authority will be made by the CPO.

In all other cases of suspected abuse the CPO will enter into preliminary discussion with the parents to ascertain any possible explanation. These discussions are exploratory, and the CPO should be careful not to prejudice the outcome of any potential multi-agency investigation.

Where, following preliminary enquiries by the CPO, a prima facie case of abuse is apparent, or where there are contra-indications to preliminary enquiries, a referral should be made under local multi-agency arrangements. The referral should be made by fax faxed either at the time of the initial disclosure or within 48 hours of the incident to the local Social Services department office

The person making the referral should provide the following information if available:

- ◆ Details about their own location, status and relationship with the child.
- ◆ Whether the child is currently safe and any deadlines approaching (e.g. child about to be" collected by parent; alleged abuser returning imminently to household)
- ◆ When the child was last seen and the current location of the child.
- ◆ The child's name, date of birth, sex, disability, or any known health care issues, ethnic origin, religion, language spoken.
- ◆ Any other names the child or family members have been known by.
- ◆ The address of the child and parents, and any known previous addresses.
- ◆ The family and household structure and details of any other significant people in the child's life.
- ◆ Details of the concern (if an incident, the time, place, persons involved)
- ◆ Information regarding parental knowledge or, and if appropriate, agreement to the referral.

### **Monitoring and Record Keeping**

It is essential that accurate records be kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child. Pastoral care concern sheets are filled in (appendix 3). These records are then kept in secure, confidential files, which are separate from the child's school records by the CPO. It is important to recognise that regulations published in 1989 do not authorise or require the disclosure to parents of any written information relating to Child Protection. However, it is preferable, where circumstances allow, that parents be informed of and agree to any referral being made (unless it relates to sexual abuse).

Staff must keep the CPO informed of:

- ◆ poor attendance & punctuality
- ◆ concerns about appearance and dress
- ◆ changed or unusual behaviour
- ◆ concerns about health and emotional well being
- ◆ deterioration in educational progress
- ◆ discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child
- ◆ concerns about home conditions or situations
- ◆ concerns about pupil on pupil abuse (including serious bullying)

When there is suspicion of significant harm to a child and a referral is made as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family. Use of previous records (if available) may prove to be particularly useful in this respect.

All communications, whether verbal or written, are strictly confidential and only when the Headmistress deems it appropriate, will other members of staff be informed.

This procedure for child protection will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the proprietor. Support must be given to members of staff involved in child protection referral and, in the interest and protection of all staff, the procedure for child protection shall be under continual review in order to eliminate any bad practice.

### **The concept of significant harm.**

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of "Significant Harm" as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in family life in the interests of children.

There are no absolute criteria to rely on when judging what constitutes significant harm. Overall, it can be described as the detrimental outcome of various forms of child maltreatment to the child's well-being.

**Harm** means ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development.

**Development** means physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

**Ill-treatment** includes sexual abuse and forms of ill-treatment which are not physical.

**Health** includes physical or mental health.

Where the question of whether harm suffered by a child is significant turns on the child's health and development, the child's health or development shall be compared with that which could reasonably be expected of a similar child.

### **Definitions and Symptoms of Abuse**

There are four main categories of abuse – physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. The list of symptoms given is not exhaustive or comprehensive but consists of frequently observed symptoms. It is important to remember that most abuse involves more than one main type, for example, sexual and emotional abuse may be recognised together. These symptoms, for example cuts and grazes, may also be accidental and not a sign of abuse. These different types of abuse require different approaches. A child suffering from physical abuse may be in immediate and serious danger. Action should, therefore, be taken immediately. With other forms of abuse there is a need to ensure that adequate information is gathered. There is also a need to make sure that grounds for suspicion have been adequately investigated and recorded. The need to collate information must be balanced against the need for urgent action. If there are reasonable grounds for suspicion then a decision to monitor the situation should only be taken after consultation. A situation that should cause particular concern is that of a child who fails to thrive without any obvious reason. In such a situation a medical investigation will be required to consider the causes.

### **Physical Injury**

Symptoms:

- ◆ **bruises and abrasions** - especially about the face, head, genitals or other parts of the body where they would not be expected to occur given the age of the child. Some types of bruising are particularly characteristic of non-accidental injury especially when the child's explanation does not match the nature of injury or when it appears frequently.
- ◆ **slap marks** — these may be visible on cheeks or buttocks.
- ◆ **twin bruises on either side of the mouth or cheeks** - can be caused by pinching or grabbing, sometimes to make a child eat or to stop a child from speaking.
- ◆ **bruising on both sides of the ear** — this is often caused by grabbing a child that is attempting to run away. It is very painful to be held by the ear, as well as humiliating and this is a common injury.
- ◆ **grip marks on arms or trunk** - gripping bruises on arm or trunk can be associated with shaking a child. Shaking can cause one of the most serious injuries to a child; i.e. a brain haemorrhage as the brain hits the inside of the skull. X-rays and other tests

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are required to fully diagnose the effects of shaking. Grip marks can also be indicative of sexual abuse.

- ◆ **black eyes** – are mostly commonly caused by an object such as a fist coming into contact with the eye socket. NB. A heavy bang on the nose, however, can cause bruising to spread around the eye but a doctor will be able to tell if this has occurred.
- ◆ damage to the mouth – e.g. bruised/cut lips or torn skin where the upper lip joins the mouth.
- ◆ **bite marks**
- ◆ **fractures**
- ◆ **poisoning or other misuse of drugs** – e.g. overuse of sedatives.
- ◆ **burns and/or scalds** – a round, red burn on tender, non-protruding parts like the mouth, inside arms and on the genitals will almost certainly have been deliberately inflicted. Any burns that appear to be cigarette burns should be cause for concern. Some types of scalds known as 'dipping scalds' are always cause for concern. An experienced person will notice skin splashes caused when a child accidentally knocks over a hot cup of tea. In contrast a child who has been deliberately 'dipped' in a hot bath will not have splash marks.

### **Neglect**

Symptoms:

- ◆ **Dirty**
- ◆ **Lack of appropriate clothing**
- ◆ **Smells of urine**
- ◆ **Unkempt hair**
- ◆ **No parental interest** (a distinction needs to be made between situations where children are inadequately clad, dirty or smelly because they come from homes where neatness and cleanliness are unimportant and those where the lack of care is preventing the child' from thriving.)
- ◆ **Underweight** — a child may be frequently hungry or pre-occupied with food or in the habit of stealing food or with the intention of procuring food. There is particular cause for concern where a persistently underweight child gains weight when away from home, for example, when in hospital or on a school trip. Some children also lose weight or fail to gain weight during school holidays when school lunches are not available and this is a cause for concern.
- ◆ **Body sores**
- ◆ **Not wanting to communicate**
- ◆ **Behaviour problems**
- ◆ **Attention seeking**
- ◆ **Lack of respect**
- ◆ **Often in trouble – police**
- ◆ **Bullying**
- ◆ **Use of bad language**
- ◆ **Always out at all hours**
- ◆ **Stealing**
- ◆ **Lack of confidence – low self-esteem**
- ◆ **Jealousy**

### **Sexual Abuse**

Symptoms:

- ◆ **a detailed sexual knowledge inappropriate to the age of the child.**
- ◆ **behaviour that is excessively affectionate or sexual towards other children or adults.**
- ◆ **attempts to inform by making a disclosure about the sexual abuse** often begin by the initial sharing of limited information with an adult. It is also very characteristic of such children that they have an excessive pre-occupation with secrecy and try to bind the adults to secrecy or confidentiality.
- ◆ **a fear of medical examinations.**
- ◆ **a fear of being alone** — this applies to friends/family/neighbours/baby-sitters, etc
- ◆ **a sudden loss of appetite, compulsive eating, anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.**
- ◆ **excessive masturbation** is especially worrying when it takes place in public.
- ◆ **promiscuity**
- ◆ **sexual approaches or assaults** - on other children or adults.
- ◆ **urinary tract infections (UTI), sexually transmitted disease (STD)** are all cause for immediate concern in young children, or in adolescents if his/her partner cannot be identified.
- ◆ **bruising** to the buttocks, lower abdomen, thighs and genital/rectal areas. Bruises may be confined to grip marks where a child has been held so that sexual abuse can take place.
- ◆ **discomfort or pain** particularly in the genital or anal areas.
- ◆ **drawing of pornographic or sexually explicit images.**
- ◆ **withdrawn**
- ◆ **rejecting physical contact or demanding attention**

**Emotional Abuse**

- ◆ **Symptoms:**
- ◆ **Crying**
- ◆ **Rocking**
- ◆ **Withdrawn**
- ◆ **Not wanting to socialise**
- ◆ **Cringing**
- ◆ **Picking up points through conversation with children**
- ◆ **Bad behaviour**
- ◆ **Aggression**
- ◆ **Behaviour changes**
- ◆ **Bribery by parent**
- ◆ **Self infliction**
- ◆ **Lack of confidence**
- ◆ **Attention seeking**
- ◆ **Isolation from peers – unable to communicate**
- ◆ **Clingy**
- ◆ **Afraid of authoritative figures**
- ◆ **Treating others as you have been treated**

### **Monitoring and Record Keeping**

It is essential that accurate records be kept where there are concerns about the welfare of a child. These records are kept in secure, confidential files, which are separate from the child's school records by the CPO. It is important to recognise that regulations published in 1989 do not authorise or require the disclosure to parents of any written information relating to Child Protection. However, it is preferable, where circumstances allow, that parents be informed of and agree to any referral being made (unless it relates to sexual abuse).

Staff must keep the CPO informed of:

- ◆ poor attendance & punctuality
- ◆ concerns about appearance and dress
- ◆ changed or unusual behaviour
- ◆ concerns about health and emotional well being
- ◆ deterioration in educational progress
- ◆ discussions with parents about concerns relating to their child
- ◆ concerns about home conditions or situations
- ◆ concerns about pupil on pupil abuse (including serious bullying)

When there is suspicion of significant harm to a child and a referral is made as much information as possible should be given about the nature of the suspicions, the child and the family. Use of previous records (if available) may prove to be particularly useful in this respect.

All communications, whether verbal or written, are strictly confidential and only when the Headmistress deems it appropriate, will other members of staff be informed.

This procedure for child protection will be reviewed annually in conjunction with the Alpha Plus Group and Governors.

Support must be given to members of staff involved in child protection referral and, in the interest and protection of all staff, the procedure for child protection shall be under continual review in order to eliminate any bad practice.

The Management of Chepstow House recognises that staff involved in a child protection issue will find it distressing and will offer support and guidance accordingly.

### **For contact with Child protection specialists available for consultation in Kensington and Chelsea**

Glen Peache (LADO)

**Head of Family Services Performance Audit and Review**

**Room 228, Kensington Town Hall**

**Hornton Street, London W8 7NX**

☐ 020 7361 3317

✉ [glen.peache@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:glen.peache@rbkc.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1**

**What to do if a child approaches you to discuss allegations of abuse**

Any member of staff who has contact with children at Chepstow House may be approached by a child who needs to talk about something in confidence. Here are some basic principles to follow if this happens to you.

What to do	What not to do
Stay calm	Do not panic. Don't over react. It is extremely unlikely that the child is in immediate danger
Listen, hear and believe	Do not probe for more information. Questioning the child may affect how the disclosure is received later on
Give time to the person to say what they want	Do not make assumptions. Do not paraphrase or offer alternative explanations or suggestions
Reassure and explain that they have done the right thing in telling. Explain that only those professionals who need to know will be informed	Do not promise confidentiality to keep secrets or that everything will be OK (it might not)
Act immediately in accordance with the procedure in the Child Protection Policy	Do not try to deal with it yourself
Record accurately in writing as soon as possible what was said and without personal comment	Do not make negative comments about the alleged abuser. Do not make personal observations. Do not make a child repeat a story unnecessarily
Report to the Child Protection Officer only	Do not 'gossip' with colleagues about what has been said to you

It is the duty of anyone who works with children at Chepstow House to report any suspicions or disclosures of abuse. This includes teachers, teaching assistants, kitchen and lunch staff, office staff, peripatetic music staff and supply staff. It is not for the individual member of staff approached to decide whether or not a suspicion or allegation is true. All must be taken seriously and dealt with according to the policy and procedures laid down at Chepstow House.

## Appendix 2

# **Code of Behaviour - for All Staff and Volunteers**

## Interaction with Pupils: Model Code of Conduct for Staff

### **You must not:-**

1. Staff and volunteers **should not** spend excessive amounts of time alone with children, away from others. Meetings with individual children should be avoided or take place within sight of others. If privacy is needed, the door should remain open and other staff or volunteers should be aware of the meeting.
2. Staff and volunteers are **advised not to** make unnecessary physical contact with children. However, there may be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable, such as providing comfort at times of distress, or physical support in contact sports or similar. In all such cases contact should only take place with the consent of the child.
3. It is **not good practice** to take children alone in a car, however short the journey. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the parents (or guardians) and the head or a member of the SMT
5. Staff and volunteers **should not** start an investigation or question anyone after an allegation or concern has been raised. This is the job of the authorities. You should just record the facts and report these to a designated person.
6. Staff and volunteers should **never** (even in fun) –
  - a. Initiate or engage in sexually provocative conversations or activity.
  - b. Allow the use of inappropriate language to go unchallenged.
  - c. Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves.
  - d. Allow any allegations made by a child go without being reported and addressed, or either trivialise or exaggerate child abuse issues.
  - e. Make promises to keep any disclosure confidential from relevant authorities.
7. Staff or volunteers **should not** show favouritism to any one child, nor should they issue or threaten any form of physical punishment.

### **You must:-**

8. Staff and volunteers **must respect** children's rights to privacy and encourage children and adults to feel comfortable enough to report attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
9. Staff and volunteers **will be expected** to act with discretion with regard to their personal relationships. They should ensure their personal relationships do not affect their role within the school.
10. All staff and volunteers **should be aware** of the procedures for reporting concerns or incidents, and should familiarise themselves with the contact details of the designated persons.
11. If a member of staff or volunteer finds himself or herself the subject of inappropriate affection or attention from a child, **they should** make others aware of this.
12. If a member of staff or volunteer has any concerns relating to the welfare of a child in their care, be it concerns about actions/behaviours of another staff member or volunteer or concerns based on any conversation with the child; particularly where the child makes an allegation, they should report this to a designated person.



**Appendix 4 Alpha Plus and London Child Protection Procedures**  
**Alpha Plus Guidelines on Child Protection - Professional Abuse Policy**

Guidelines for the management of allegations of abuse by staff and other professionals.

**Underpinning Issues**

The employee should not be told of the allegations until the Child Protection Coordinator agrees to this course of action, after considering the welfare of the child. The expectation is that in most cases the employee will be immediately informed of any allegations, but in the case of alleged sexual abuse, (or other rare cases requiring special action to protect a child), the Child Protection Coordinator will ask for a delay in informing the alleged perpetrator to ensure that the child is protected, and evidence secured.

The principle must be followed that the employee should be informed of the allegation as soon as possible. This should normally be within a week of the allegation and should usually be much sooner.

While considerations of child protection must be paramount, the need must also be recognised to safeguard teachers and other employees against the effects of false and malicious allegations.

**Process**

The Child Protection Coordinator will coordinate any investigation with the appropriate Social Services team, the police and any other agencies that are involved, and will act as a channel of communication with schools. It would normally be the case that in the event of an allegation against an employee which is likely to require full operation of the Child Protection Procedures, there will be an inter agency planning meeting, to which the Head / Principal will be invited, which will determine the appropriate action.

If a matter is referred for formal investigation under the Child Protection procedures, consideration should be given to suspending the employee until investigations have been completed. Suspension does not imply a finding of guilt but is intended to enable a dispassionate investigation of the facts, unimpeded by interpersonal tensions. Any employee who is suspended must be informed immediately for the reason for suspension.

At any stage in the process as soon as it becomes clear to the Principal that the conduct of the employee if it happened, could be regarded as gross misconduct (i.e. conduct which if proven goes to the root of the contract of employment), then it is important that the employee is suspended. If this is not done, it could undermine the case for dismissal, because the employer has not immediately treated the alleged conduct as so serious as to require suspension. Clearly the decision on suspension will only be made once it is established there is a case to be investigated. So such action will only follow the initial gathering of the facts to determine that the alleged misconduct could have occurred, and that there is evidence which needs investigation. It must be re-emphasised that taking such action does not imply any finding of guilt.

The Head / Principal must ensure that the employee is provided with the opportunity for personal support by someone who is not involved in pursuing the allegation. This should be additional to ensuring the employee has the opportunity to contact their trade union or professional association.

If the case is not referred under the Child Protection arrangements, but in the professional opinion of the Head / Principal further action is necessary, then the allegation will be investigated under the disciplinary/complaints procedures.

Clearly any case of striking or otherwise physically chastising a child is at first sight a reason for disciplinary investigation, not least because corporal punishment is contrary to the Group's policy.

**London Child Protection Procedures - Child Protection – Professional Abuse Policy**

Guidelines for the management of allegations of abuse by staff and other Professionals.

These guide lines are taken from the **London Child Protection Procedures 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2007**.

For further details refer to the LCPP in the Head's Office.

**General considerations relating to allegations and concerns of abuse**

The employer will inform the LA designated (LADO) immediately an allegation is made. They will then advise the employer whether or not informing the parents of the child/ren involved will impede the disciplinary or investigative processes. Acting on this advice, if it is agreed that the information can be fully or partially shared, the employer will inform the parents. In some circumstances, however, the parents may need to be told straight away (e.g. if a child is injured and requires medical treatment).

The employer will seek advice from the LADO, the police and/or LA children's social care about how much information should be disclosed to the accused person. Subject to restrictions on the information that can be shared, the employer will, as soon as possible, inform the accused person about the nature of the allegation, how enquiries will be conducted and the possible outcome (e.g. disciplinary action, and dismissal or referral to the barring lists or regulatory body)

The accused member of staff should:

- ◆ Be treated fairly and honestly and helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved.
- ◆ Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary or related process
- ◆ If suspended, be kept up to date about events in the workplace.

**Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against publicity while an allegation is being investigated or considered. Apart from keeping the child, parents and accused person (where this would not place the child at further risk) up to date with progress of the case, information should be restricted to those who have a need to know in order to protect children, facilitate enquiries, manage related disciplinary or suitability processes.

**Support**

The organisation, together with LA children's social care and/or police, where they are involved, will consider the impact on the child concerned and provide support as appropriate. Liaison between the agencies will take place in order to ensure that the child's needs are addressed.

As soon as possible after an allegation has been received, the accused member of staff will be advised to contact their union or professional association. Human resources will be consulted at the earliest opportunity in order that appropriate support can be provided via the organisation's occupational health or employee welfare arrangements.

### **Suspension**

Suspension is a neutral act and it will not be automatic. It will be considered in any case where:

- ◆ There is cause to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm; or
- ◆ The allegation warrants investigation by the police; or
- ◆ The allegation is so serious that it might be grounds for dismissal

If a strategy meeting/discussion is to be held or if the LA children's social care or the police are to make enquiries, the LADO will canvas their views on suspension and inform the employer. Only the employer, however, has the power to suspend an accused employee and they cannot be required to do so by a local authority or police.

Suspension does not imply a finding of guilt but is intended to enable a dispassionate investigation of the facts, unimpeded by interpersonal tensions. Any employee who is suspended will be informed immediately for the reason for suspension.

### **Whistle – blowing**

All staff will be made aware of the organization's whistle – blowing policy and feel confident to voice concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues.

### **Referral to Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) or regulatory body**

Guidance on the ISA the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

If the allegation is substantiated and the person is dismissed or the employer ceases to use the person's services, or the person resigns or otherwise ceases to provide their services, the LADO will discuss with the employer whether a referral will be made to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), and/or a regulatory body E.g. the General Teaching Council or General Medical Council). The referral will be made using the ISA Referral Form after consulting the ISA Referral Guidance. Consideration will then be given by the ISA as to whether the individual will be barred from, or have conditions imposed in respect of, working with children.

Employers have a legal duty to refer concerns to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). A referral MUST be made when an employee or volunteer is removed from working with children or vulnerable adults (even temporarily) because the employer thinks the person has engaged in relevant conduct\*.

If a referral is to be made, it will be submitted within one month of the allegation being substantiated.

\*Relevant conduct is when a person has harmed or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult. Inciting or encouraging another person to harm a child or vulnerable adult is also relevant conduct.

For further guidance refer to the: ISA Referral Guidance – [www.isa.gov.org](http://www.isa.gov.org)